

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Partitioning, Disaggregation, and Leasing of Spectrum*, WT Docket No. 19-38

In 2015, Senator Klobuchar and Senator Fischer introduced bipartisan legislation to improve universal service by extending the reach of wireless broadband in rural communities. They proposed to do this by providing incentives for wireless carriers to partition, disaggregate, and lease unused spectrum to smaller carriers serving rural areas. This rulemaking builds on their proposal, which was featured in appropriations legislation from last year. To this effort, I offer my full support.

I also offer my optimism. That's because at its core, universal service is the principle that no matter who you are or where you live you need access to modern communications to have a fair shot at 21st century success. This is a sacred responsibility under the law. But we all know that the tools this agency is using have not been sufficient to get the job done. Millions of Americans still lack access to affordable broadband, especially in rural communities. So it's a positive step that through this proceeding we evolve our thinking about universal service and recognize that spectrum policy tools can help bring advanced communication to remote areas.

Now here's the next step we should take if we want to be successful. The partitioning, disaggregation, and leasing contemplated here will work better if our secondary markets can operate with full information. Today, the place to go for information about who owns spectrum and who might sell or lease it is our Universal Licensing System. But this database is opaque. It's not user friendly. Moreover, it will only grow more complex and harder to use as we divide and divvy up licenses as contemplated here. So I believe as we move forward with this proceeding, we need in parallel a proceeding that will improve this database and increase the transparency of spectrum ownership. I hope my colleagues agree—and I look forward to making it happen.